expected to be completed in August 2008. The ship will be commissioned thereafter.

(b) 'Admiral Gorshkov' is a 44,500 tonne steam powered ship, capable of a maximum speed of 29 knots with a range of 7000 Nautical Miles. The aircraft carrier is being re-equipped with a Ski Jump and arrestor Gear System to cater for the Take off and Landing of the aircraft with a view to enable it to operate MIG 29K aircraft. In addition to MIG 29K, the ship will operate Ka-28, Ka-31, Chetak and ALH helicopters.

Shortage of officers in the army

†193. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a shortage of thousands of officers in Army;

(b) if so, the number of posts lying vacant and since when the said shortage of officers existed and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that the strength of young officers in commanding position in army is less in comparison to other countries;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government have constituted any study/Enquiry Commission for improving the said conditions; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) At present there is a shortage of 11709 officers in the Indian Army. Shortfalls in the Army have existed, in varying degrees, since 1950.

(c) The strength of young officers in commanding positions in the Army is based on the organizational structure of each Army. Hence, it would not be appropriate to undertake such a comparison in isolation.

(d) to (f) Do not arise in view of (c) above.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.